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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. TDCSDB-3/648,668

SUBJECT VIEWS OF DR. TRAN KIM TUYEN ON VIETNAMESE
REACTIONS TO INCREASED U.S. MILITARY AID

DATE DISTR. 22 NOVEMBER 1961

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE

DATE OF INFO. LATE NOVEMBER 1961

REFERENCES IN 26490

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (21 NOVEMBER 1961)

APPRAISAL 2 (STATEMENTS REPRESENT TRUE VIEWS OF TUYEN) FIELD REPORT NO. FVS-6715

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE AMERICAN OBSERVER (B) FROM DR. TUYEN, DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE.

1. ON 21 NOVEMBER 1961, DR TRAN KIM TUEYN, DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE (SEPES) SAID THAT ONLY A FEW OFFICIALS CLOSE TO PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM WERE AWARE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY GENERAL MAXWELL TAYLOR AFTER HIS OCTOBER VISIT TO VIETNAM. THOSE ADVISERS WHO WERE AWARE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FELT THAT THE UNOBTRUSIVE METHOD SUGGESTED OF INTRODUCING AMERICAN AERIAL AND MARITIME SUPPORT UNITS WAS AN INSUFFICIENT MEASURE IN THE CURRENT CRISIS. MOST GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) LEADERS BELIEVE THAT IN THE PRESENT CRITICAL SECURITY SITUATION, A CLEAR INDICATION OF AMERICAN SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF AT LEAST A TOKEN FORCE OF COMBAT TROOPS WAS REQUIRED TO BOLSTER MORALE. THIS WOULD BE WELCOMED BY ALL CLASSES OF

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E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(c), (D) or (E)
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VIETNAMESE, INCLUDING STUDENTS, LABORERS, FARMERS, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS, AND EVEN ANTI-REGIME NATIONALISTS.

2. IN CONTRAST, PRESIDENT DIEM HAD TO BE STRONGLY PERSUADED BY MANY OF HIS CLOSEST ADVISORS, PARTICULARLY SECRETARY OF STATE AT THE PRESIDENCY, NGUYEN DINH THUAN, TO REQUEST EVEN THE LIMITED SIZE AND TYPES OF INCREASED AMERICAN MILITARY SUPPORT THAT HE DID REQUEST OF GENERAL TAYLOR. DIEM'S RELUCTANCE TO ASK FOR FULL-SCALE AMERICAN MILITARY HELP IS TIED IN WITH HIS FEAR THAT THE PRESENCE OF SUCH FORCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY DIMINISH HIS POWER AND INDEPENDENCE. DIEM ALSO FEARS THAT MOST DISCONTENTED ELEMENTS WHO NOW FIND FAULT WITH THE REGIME WILL CATCH THE EAR OF THE INCREASING NUMBER OF AMERICANS WHO WOULD COME TO VIETNAM; THEY MIGHT SUCCEED IN CONVINCING AMERICANS NEW TO THE VIETNAMESE POLITICAL SCENE THAT THE PRESENT REGIME SHOULD BE SUPERSEDED IN THE INTEREST OF GETTING A MORE EFFECTIVE ANTI-COMMUNIST REGIME.

3. DIEM'S CONCERN IN THIS REGARD HAS SOME JUSTIFICATION, FOR ALREADY SOME VIETNAMESE, WHO WISH TO CURE GVN BUREAUCRATIC INEFFICIENCIES BY WORKING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUBSTITUTE REGIME, HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CATCHING SYMPATHETIC AMERICAN EARS, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE MILITARY. THIS HAS DISCOURAGED REFORMIST ELEMENTS IN THE GVN SUCH AS TUYEN AND THUAN WHO ARE PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE GVN SLOWNESS OF ADMINISTRATION AND BUREAUCRATIC INEFFICIENCIES AND EXCESSIVE

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CENTRALIZATION. ALARMED BY REPORTS OF GROWING DISSATISFACTION AND OPPOSITION, DIEM HAS TENDED TO BE EVEN LESS WILLING THAN PREVIOUSLY TO LISTEN TO THE REFORMERS SUGGESTIONS THAT HE MAKE BUREAUCRATIC CHANGES, MAKE RAPID FORCEFUL DECISIONS, AND DECENTRALIZE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

4. THE PRESIDENT'S BROTHER AND POLITICAL ADVISOR, NGO DINH NHU, COULD IMPROVE GVN EFFICIENCY AS HEAD OF AN EMERGENCY GOVERNING COMMITTEE WITH SPECIAL POWERS, EXCEPT THAT NHU SHARES THE PRESIDENT'S APPREHENSION REGARDING THE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF ANTI-REGIME ELEMENTS INFLUENCING NEW AMERICAN ARRIVALS ADVERSELY. FROM THE POPULAR VIEWPOINT, NHU IS NOT A GOOD CHOICE BECAUSE OF THE DELETERIOUS INFLUENCE OF MADAME NHU AND THE INTENSE POPULAR FEELING AGAINST MADAME NHU'S SUPERCILIOUS WAYS.

5. TUEYN BELIEVED THAT INTRODUCTION OF AMERICAN COMBAT FORCES, EVEN IN TOKEN STRENGTH, WOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED BY THE VIETNAMESE PUBLIC AS AIDING THE DIEM REGIME TO CRUSH ALL POLITICAL OPPOSITION. HE BELIEVED THAT THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION TO INTRODUCTION OF US COMBAT TROOPS WOULD CONTINUE TO COME FROM DIEM AND FROM EXTREME NATIONALIST ADVISORS WHO FELT THERE MIGHT BE A POSSIBLE MISUSE OF AMERICAN STRENGTH TO CONTROL THE DIEM GOVERNMENT. TUEYN HIMSELF EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT INCREASED AMERICAN MILITARY STRENGTH IN VIETNAM WOULD NOT BE USED AS A POWER WEDGE TO FORCE DECISIONS

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UPON DIEM, BUT THAT AMERICAN POLICY MAKERS ON THE HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL WOULD CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH GVN REFORMISTS TO SUBTLY SUGGEST IMPROVEMENTS IN GVN ADMINISTRATION, BUT REASSURE DIEM THAT OVERTHROW OF HIS REGIME WAS COMPLETELY OUT OF CONSIDERATION.

6. FIELD DISSEM: STATE MAAG USOM CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

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